



**NORTHERN ARIZONA
UNIVERSITY**
The W. A. Franke College of Business

Ajo Visitor Study



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The AHRRC team:

Cheryl Cothran, AHRRC Director
Thomas Combrink, Senior Research Specialist
Melinda Bradford, Research Specialist

Executive Summary

This survey of visitors to Ajo, Arizona was undertaken to gather more reliable local and regional data than is available from statewide or national panel surveys which contain too few cases to reliably represent visitation to this area. This survey process collected a total of 92 surveys from visitors to Ajo over a four month period from January through April 2012 – a sufficient sample to produce a snapshot of tourism in the Ajo area. This information will assist tourism professionals in Ajo with targeted marketing efforts, product development, and advocacy for an industry that is critical to the health of the regional economy.

The general profile of Ajo visitors is middle aged travelers often on overnight trips who are passing through while traveling to/from Tucson, Phoenix, Yuma and California. Many are visiting Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and some are traveling on to Sonora, Mexico. They are quite interested in outdoor recreation along with area culture, art and natural history, for which they expressed appreciation.

A summary of the specific findings of the Ajo visitor survey follows:

- The most important way people heard about Ajo was that they had been there before, followed by recommendations from friends and family, and the Internet or online sources. The category “other” also ranked high.
- For one-third (36.4%) Ajo was the primary destination of their trip, while the other two-thirds were passing through to somewhere else (63.6%). Those passing through were most likely headed to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Tucson, Yuma, Casa Grande, Rocky Point (Mexico) or California.
- Organ Pipe Cactus NM led the list of communities and attractions also visited on this trip (66%), followed by Tucson (60.4%), Phoenix (47.2%), Yuma (35.8%), the Tohono O’odham Nation (22.6%), and Rocky Point (13.2%).
- The two main reasons people visit Ajo are leisure vacations (56.4%) and just passing through (30.9%), followed by visiting friends and relatives (16.4%), climate relief (14.5%) and “other” reasons (12.7%).
- Visitors travel almost entirely by automobile – half (50%) by private auto, one-fourth in an RV/Camper (23.4%), and 23.4% by rental car.
- Those visiting Ajo only for the day represented two-fifths of the sample (40.4%) with the remainder (59.6%) staying overnight in the Ajo area. For day-trippers, the average number of hours spent in Ajo was 3.5 hours; for overnight visitors, the average number of nights was 4.3 nights. Although the median number – which is probably a more realistic estimate – was 2.0 nights.
- Over two-thirds of overnight visitors (71.4%) stayed in hotel/motels, 14.3% stayed in a RV Park, about one in 10 stayed in a campground (8.6%) and a few in the homes of friends or relatives (5.7%).
- Those with the longest average stays were in RV parks (14 nights), or campgrounds (7.3 nights).
- Travel patterns indicate that most survey respondents spent the “night before” in Ajo (18.0%), followed by Why (15%) and Tucson (6%). They planned to spend “tonight” in Ajo (77.1%), followed by Why (14.3%), Tucson (2.9%), Organ Pipe Cactus (2.9%) and BLM lands in the area (2.9%).

- Where are visitors from? One-fourth of visitors are Arizona residents (25.0%), followed by Wisconsin (13.6%). Next are – Oregon and California (at 11.4% each). In all, visitors from 16 states were captured in the sample. The January-April time period guaranteed winter visitors were in the mix.
- One-fourth of all in-state visitors 27.3% are from the Greater Phoenix area or Phoenix MSA (metropolitan statistical area).
- Foreign visitors represented one-fourth (22.8%) of the sample. The vast majority of these were from Canada (66.7%), followed by Germany (14.3%).
- Visitors were most interested in the three activities: Visiting museums (4.2 mean using a 1 to 5 scale), Tribal Arts and Culture (4.1 mean) and Visiting National and State Parks (4.0 mean). Next, were Wildlife-viewing and birding (3.9 mean) and Scenic drives and Geocaching (3.8 each), followed by Visiting Cultural and Historic sites (3.6 mean).
- This interest translated into actual visits to these top-5: Hiking and Walking trails (85.0%); Visiting National and State Parks (85.0%); Scenic Drives (70.0%); Wildlife-Viewing Birding (60.0%); Visiting Cultural and Historic sites (40.0%); and, Visiting Museums (40.0%).
- The most visited specific attractions were: Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument (90.0%), Open Pit Mine Overlook (52.5%), the Plaza/Train Depot (47.5%) and the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge (42.5%).
- Measured on a scale from one to 10 (where 10 is high), Ajo visitors rated their experiences at a high mean of 8.2. Ajo's high percentage of return visitors keep coming back because they are very satisfied with their overall experiences in the community and with specific events and activities.
- Average party size for Ajo is 2.1 persons (slightly smaller than the 2011 Arizona average of 2.7), similar to the median (or midpoint of all responses) of two persons (one man, one woman and no children).
- Party composition finds that almost three-fourths of all parties are Family members (70.5%), followed by those traveling alone (15.9%), and with Family and friends (13.6%).
- What did visitors spend in Ajo? The largest daily mean expenditures were for lodging (\$62/day), followed by restaurants/grocery (\$39/day), transportation (\$36/day), shopping/jewelry/antiques (\$20/day) and recreation/tour/entrance/ permit (\$15/day).
- Demographically, slightly more women (52.2%) than men (47.8%) visit Ajo.
- Ajo visitors have an average age of 49 years, slightly older than the average for Arizona generally (47 years); two-thirds (65.9%) are under age 50, and one-third are over 50.
- The average annual income of those who visit Ajo is \$62,799 – lower than the average for 2011 visitors statewide of \$74,660.
- Note: due to the limited sample size of 92 surveys, a full economic impact analysis for Ajo was not possible.

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Ajo Tourism Study

Introduction

The tourism and hospitality industries are vitally important to the economic growth and stability of the U.S. economy. Tourism is the nation's top services export, one of the top three industries, and one of the nation's largest employers. In Arizona, the 2008-09 recession demonstrated once again how central tourism is as an economic driver and generator of tax revenue for the state and local economies. Going forward, Arizona's rural communities will be looking for ways to revive and reinvigorate their tourism offerings and this research can be an important part of that effort. Research of this type is a crucial tool to inform and help guide local communities in their product development and tourism promotion efforts.

Advertising is expensive and promotional dollars are increasingly scarce, requiring targeted marketing to the most receptive and productive market segments. The more information a region or community has about its current visitors, their experiences and travel patterns, the more accuracy can be applied in efforts to attract similar visitors or reach out to new markets. What are the demographics of Ajo visitors, where do they come from, what products attract them to the area, what is the level of satisfaction with the visitor experience, how can it be improved, how can stays be extended, and what do industry insiders see as emerging trends?

The community of Ajo is located 120 miles southwest of Phoenix and 130 miles west of Tucson in western Pima County. The area is located south of Interstate 10 on Highway 85 between Gila Bend and the Mexico Border. Highway 85 serves as a major transportation corridor for visitors traveling to Sonora, Mexico and the beach community of Rocky Point (Puerto Penasco) a popular spring break vacation spot. The community has a long and interesting copper mining history, with a large open pit mine located adjacent to the town. Combined with a history of mining the town also contains some unique architectural heritage in the Curley School, and the Train Depot/Plaza. Ajo is also the gateway community to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and the sprawling Tohono O'odham Nation. Highway 86 south of Ajo provides an alternative route to Tucson through the Tohono O'odham reservation and passes the observatory at Kitt Peak. The Ajo area has a variety of cultural, historic and natural attractions that are available for visitors.

The information gleaned from this survey forms a picture of tourism in Ajo, Arizona that can shape the tourism planning efforts of this and other southern Arizona communities. The data from this report can help this area pursue regional marketing strategies and develop products to entice visitors to explore the area and increase the economic impact of tourism. Finally, the data in this study will allow Ajo area tourism leaders to pursue sources of outside funding for tourism promotion and use these marketing dollars to further a regional tourism vision.

Research Methods

In 2011 the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) contracted with the Arizona Hospitality Research & Resource Center (AHRRC) at Northern Arizona University to conduct research on tourism in Ajo as part of an ongoing plan to gather regional and community based tourism data statewide. An information meeting to discuss the tourism survey was convened by AOT at the Ajo Chamber of Commerce to introduce tourism leaders and representatives to the survey idea and methods. AOT indicated that it was willing to fund the community surveys if the communities were willing to “champion” a local effort, muster volunteers to help distribute and collect surveys according to a prescribed survey schedule, and to promote the project among their respective constituents. All representatives present agreed to participate and were eager for the opportunity to receive area specific tourism data.

The Ajo tourism survey was designed by the professional staff at the AHRRC in conjunction with the AOT research staff and representatives of Ajo tourism businesses. The instrument was developed in Teleform™, a computerized scanning program that affords rapid data capture of the completed questionnaires. The two-page survey was developed to obtain information on visitors’ origins, demographics, activities in the area, attractions visited, reasons for visiting, travel patterns, information sources and expenditures made in the various communities. The surveys were collected according to a seasonally adjusted stratified sample based on historic visitation patterns. The Ajo tourism survey was conducted over a four month period, January to April 2012. Normally tourism surveys are collected over a year-long time span, however, the size and isolation of the community, combined with very hot summer temperatures required the survey period to be restricted to the only months that historically yield tourists, the winter months. The collection schedule was randomized to ensure that surveys were distributed on both weekdays and weekends. Each participating survey site was provided a fixed number of surveys to be distributed and collected according to a predetermined survey schedule. Over the course of the four month study, surveys were collected during two weeks of each month.

The survey was designed to be self-administered, i.e., visitors bureau, hotel/motel, and museum or attraction staff handed the survey to visitors who completed and returned it to staff. In Ajo a majority of the surveys were completed by the Ajo Chamber of Commerce and by a lodging/RV park in the community. Completed surveys were forwarded to NAU on a monthly basis for analysis. The identified community tourism leader was responsible for distributing the surveys to the various participating entities, according to the survey schedule. A total of 92 surveys were collected for the survey period, providing a 85% confidence level and 15% margin of error for the validity of the results. **The sample size is not large enough to calculate an economic impact of tourism on the Ajo area.** While this is fewer surveys than hoped for, tourism champions are nevertheless to be commended for their efforts to collect them. The remainder of this report presents survey results for Ajo.

Survey Results

The majority of completed Ajo surveys were collected at the Chamber of Commerce’s Visitor Center, and at lodging and RV properties around Ajo. All surveys were collected during the high season for tourism in Ajo, which is from January to April. Table 1 shows the number of surveys collected monthly.

Table 1: Number of Surveys by Month

	Count	Percent
January 2012	13	14.0%
February 2012	34	36.8%
March 2012	39	42.1%
April 2012	6	7.0%

The first question asked visitors to Ajo how they heard about the community. The largest number (41.5%) knew about Ajo because they had Been there before, followed by a substantial cohort (28.3%) that noted some other source, the most common of which was from “Maps” and “Travel Guides”. The third largest source of information about the community was Word-of-Mouth (26.4%) followed by Online/Website (20.8%). See Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: How did you hear about Ajo?

	Count	Percent
Been there before	36	41.5%
Word-of-Mouth	48	26.4%
Online/Website	18	20.8%
Newspaper	2	1.9%
Magazine	8	1.9%
TV	0	0%
Social Networking Sites	0	0%
Radio	0	0%
Other	24	28.3%

Table 3: How did you hear about Ajo? – Other

How did you hear about Ajo – Other Means?	
AAA	On the map
Chamber of Commerce	Own house here many years
Driving By	Relative
Employment NPS	Research
Looked on map	Road map
Maps	Tourist info
My husband	Travel guide
Old codgers group	Travel guidebook
	Trip in 1985

The next question addressed whether or not Ajo was the primary destination of those visitors surveyed. For one-third (36.4%) Ajo *was* the primary destination of their trip, while the other two-thirds were passing through on their way to somewhere else (63.6%). See Table 4.

Table 4: Is Ajo the primary destination of your trip?

	Count	Percent
Yes	32	36.4%
No	57	63.6%

If Ajo was not the primary destination of the trip, respondents were asked to specify where they were heading. Of interest, the largest cohort of those passing through Ajo was on their way to Organ Pipe Cactus NM (15%), followed by Tucson (9.0%), and Mexico/Puerto Penasco, Casa Grande, or Yuma (6.0% each). Almost half (47.1%) of visitors were traveling to other communities in Arizona, while 18 percent were on the way to California. See Table 5

Table 5: If Ajo is not the primary destination of your trip, what location is?

	#	Percent		#	Percent
Organ Pipe Cactus NM	5	15.0%	Quartzsite	1	3.0%
Tucson	3	9.0%	Passing through	1	3.0%
Mexico/Puerto Penasco	2	6.0%	Palm Springs, CA	1	3.0%
Casa Grande	2	6.0%	Palm Desert, CA	1	3.0%
Yuma	2	6.0%	Ontario, Canada	1	3.0%
Why-Hemet, CA	1	3.0%	Lake Havasu City	1	3.0%
Tucson/Yuma	1	3.0%	Entire Southwest	1	3.0%
Southwestern Adventure	1	3.0%	Don't have one	1	3.0%
Southern Arizona in general	1	3.0%	Desert Southwest	1	3.0%
San Diego	1	3.0%	Death Valley	1	3.0%
Salome	1	3.0%	Canada	1	3.0%
Roundtrip USA	1	3.0%	California	1	3.0%
			Arizona in general	1	3.0%

Next, respondents were asked which of a number of other communities they were also visiting on this trip. As shown in Table 6, Organ Pipe Cactus again led the list with two-thirds of respondents (66.0%) saying they planned to visit the national monument, followed by Tucson (60.4%). So, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument was the most visited site but not necessarily a destination. See Table 6.

Table 6: Do you plan to visit any of the following communities on this trip?

	Count	Percent
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	57	66.0%
Tucson area	52	60.4%
Phoenix area	41	47.2%
Yuma area	31	35.8%
Tohono O'odham Nation	19	22.6%
Puerto Penasco (Rocky Point) Mexico	11	13.2%
Nogales	8	9.4%
Other	19	22.6%

A number of “other” communities (22.6%) were also listed in Table 6 and these are shown in Table 7 below, although no particular communities stand out on this list.

Table 7: Other communities you plan to visit on this trip?

Apache Junction	Las Vegas
As much of Arizona as I can see	Mexico/San Carlos
Bouse	New Mexico
Casa Grande	Sedona
Casa Grande, Gila Bend	Southeast areas
Cochise	Tombstone
Four Corners	Tombstone/Douglas
	Tubac

When asked to characterize the primary purpose of their visit to the Ajo area, the most important reason, as noted by over half of all visitors was “Vacation – Leisure” (56.4%), which was followed closely by Just Passing Through (30.9%). Next, were those Visiting Friends and Relatives (16.4%), followed by those seeking Climate relief (14.5%), and those on a Day trip (5.5%). Smaller percentages consisted of visitors who were going to Mexico (3.6%) or scouting Relocation areas (3.6%). See Table 8.

Table 8: Primary purpose of your current visit to this area?

	Count	Percent
Vacation-Leisure	50	56.4%
Just Passing Through	28	30.9%
Visiting Friends/Relatives	15	16.4%
Climate	13	14.5%
Day trip	5	5.5%
To go to Mexico	3	3.6%
Relocation	3	3.6%
Weekend visit	2	1.8%
Business travel	2	1.8%
Other	11	12.7%

Those who selected some “other” reason for their visit were largely there to visit Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, to hike, generally recreate, and for a local fiddlers contest. See all responses for “Other” in Table 9.

Table 9: Other primary purpose of your current visit to this area?

ATV riding	Hiking in the Monument
Check on house	Organ Pipe Cactus NM
Cowboy Poetry	O.T.F. Contest
Employment ORPI	Stay at Coyote Howl
Fiddlers Contest	Visit Organ Pipe NM

How did visitors travel to Ajo? They traveled almost entirely by automobile – one half (50.0%) by private auto, another one-fourth (23.4%) by RV/Camper, and one-fourth (23.4%) by rental car. Along with three motorcyclists, a small percentage listed some “other” travel means. See Tables 10 and 11.

Table 10. Indicate your primary mode of transportation to Ajo

	Count	Percent
Private auto	47	50.0%
Rental car	22	23.4%
RV/Camper	22	23.4%
Motorcycle	3	3.2%
Tour bus	0	0.0%
Other transport	2	2.1%

Table 11. Other mode of transportation to Ajo

ATV
Plane in and out of Tucson

Are visitors staying overnight in Ajo or are they passing through to Mexico or the Tohono O'odham Nation? Visitors were asked to indicate whether they visited Ajo on a day trip or if they were staying overnight. Visitors either indicated the number of hours they stayed in the area (a day trip) or the number of nights (an overnight trip). Overnight visitors were determined by examining the number of visitors who stayed overnight in the Ajo area which included Why, and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. In Total 55 visitors or 59.6 percent of all visitors actually stayed in the area while 40.4 percent only visited the Ajo area on a day trip and stayed elsewhere. See Table 12a.

Table 12a. How long did you stay in the Ajo area?

	Count	Percent
Day Trip	37	40.4%
Overnight in Ajo area	55	59.6%

What was the average length of stay for visitors to Ajo? This question was asked as both hours only and number of nights. For those on day trips (40.4% of the total sample), the average number of hours was 3.5 hours and median (or midpoint) number of hours was 2.0 hours. For those staying overnight in the area (59.6% of the sample), the average number of nights was 4.3 nights, undoubtedly driven up by those staying in RV parks and campgrounds. The median number is probably a more realistic estimate of number of nights at two (2.0) nights. See Table 12b.

Table 12b. How long did you stay in Ajo?

	Mean	Median
If a day trip how many hours?	3.5	2.0
If staying overnight how many nights?	4.3	2.0

Those spending the night in Ajo were asked to specify the type of lodging they used. More than two-thirds (71.4%) were staying in conventional hotel/motel lodging properties, while nearly a quarter were either staying in RV Parks (14.3%) or Camping (8.6%). A rather small number of visitors stayed with friends and family (5.7%).

Which type of visitors had the longest stays? To answer this question, responses for type of lodging were cross-tabbed by the length of stay to arrive at the data in Table 13. Those who had the longest stays were those staying in RV parks (14 nights) or campgrounds (7.3 nights). It should be noted, however, that these two categories represented a small number of parties – in other words, these lengths of stay were not typical of all visitors with those staying in a hotel/motel averaging 2 nights. See Tables 13 and 14 (responses for other).

Table 13. If you are staying overnight in Ajo what type of lodging are you using?

	Where are you staying?		If staying overnight how many nights?
	Count	Percent	Mean
Hotel/Motel	41	71.4%	2.0
RV Park	8	14.3%	14.0
Camping	5	8.6%	7.3
Home of Friends or Family	3	5.7%	6.0
B&B	0	0.0%	.
Other lodging	5	8.1%	.

Table 14. Ajo Visitor Study - Other lodging you are using?

Cabin
Own home
Passing through
Rent
Roping arena

To help determine the travel patterns of visitors, they were asked where they spent “last night” and where they plan to stay “tonight.” Table 15 shows responses for “last night”, where the most important cohorts stayed in Ajo (18.0%), followed by Why (15%) and Tucson (6%). More than one-third of visitors (36.1%) spent last night in the Ajo area. See Table 15.

Table 15. In what city did you spend last night?

	Count	Percent
Ajo	10	18%
Why	8	15%
Tucson	3	6%
Ajo area BLM dispersal	2	3%
Blythe CA	2	3%
Casa Grande	2	3%
Clarkdale	2	3%
Dallas TX	2	3%
Douglas	2	3%
Gila Bend	2	3%
Glendale	2	3%
Green Valley	2	3%
Lake Havasu	2	3%
Las Cruces NM	2	3%
Minneapolis MM	2	3%
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	2	3%
Pasadena CA	2	3%
San Carlos	2	3%
San Carlos Sonora Mexico	2	3%
Sedona	2	3%
Tombstone	2	3%
Truth Or Consequences NM	2	3%
Wellton	2	3%

Table 16 presents the information on where visitors plan to spend tonight. Again, more than two-thirds (77.1%), planned to stay in Ajo, followed once again by Why (14.3%), and dispersed BLM sites (2.9%), Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument (2.9%) and Tucson (2.9%). Thus, in terms of travel patterns, the majority of overnight visitors who are staying in the Ajo area concentrate in Ajo and Why. See Table 16.

Table 16. In what city will you spend tonight?

	Count	Percent
Ajo	44	77.1%
Why	8	14.3%
Ajo area BLM Dispersal	2	2.9%
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	2	2.9%
Tucson	2	2.9%

What are the origins of visitors to Ajo? Where are they from? As shown in the following table, about one-fourth are Arizona residents (25.0%), followed by those from Wisconsin (13.6%). Next in importance are a series of states that typically send visitors to Arizona, including Oregon and California (11.4% each). The remainder of visitors are scattered through 12 other states with no single state predominating. In all, visitors from 16 states were captured in the survey sample. See Table 17.

Table 17. What is your state of origin?

	Count	Percent		Count	Percent
Arizona	18	25.0%	Pennsylvania	3	4.5%
Wisconsin	10	13.6%	Washington	3	4.5%
Oregon	8	11.4%	Nevada	3	4.5%
California	8	11.4%	Illinois	3	4.5%
Idaho	3	4.5%	Montana	3	4.5%
Colorado	3	4.5%	Alabama	3	4.5%
Texas	3	4.5%	Virginia	3	4.5%
Michigan	3	4.5%	Vermont	3	4.5%

Those who were in-state residents were asked to specify their Arizona city of origin. The majority were from Southern Arizona and Verde Valley area communities along with Lake Havasu City on the western border. See all communities in Table 18.

Table 18. Arizona city of origin

	Count	Percent		Count	Percent
Glendale	3	18.2%	Lake Havasu City	2	9.1%
Wellton	2	9.1%	Clarkdale	2	9.1%
Tucson	2	9.1%	Chino Valley	2	9.1%
Phoenix	2	9.1%	Camp Verde	2	9.1%
Pearce	2	9.1%	Bagdad	2	9.1%

A small number of foreign visitor parties (21) appeared in the Ajo sample – representing slightly more than one-fifth (22.8%) of the total sample. Therefore, the visitor breakdown for the Ajo area is 22.8 percent foreign and 77.2 percent international see Table 19a. Canada accounted for the largest single country of origin for foreign visitors (66.7%), followed by Germany (14.3%), and two parties each from Austria and Belgium. See Table 19b.

Table 19a. Foreign vs. Domestic Visitors

	Count	Percent
Foreign visitors	21	22.8%
Domestic visitors	71	77.2%

Table 19b. Country of origin

	Count	Percent
Canada	14	66.7%
Germany	3	14.3%
Austria	2	9.5%
Belgium	2	9.5%

An issue of importance to tourism industry officials is the amount of money visitor parties spend in their community – the economic impact. Thus, the survey asked visitors to estimate their expenditures in the key categories of lodging, restaurants/grocery, transportation (including gas), shopping/jewelry/antiques, and recreation/tour/entrance/permit fees. These results are shown in Table 20, along with the number of people these expenses cover, or party size, which averages two people, with the median at two people as well. The largest daily mean expenditures were for lodging at \$62/day, followed by restaurants/grocery at \$39/day, transportation at \$36/day, shopping/jewelry/antiques at \$20/day, and recreation/tour/entrance/permit fees at \$15/day. In some cases median expenditures (midpoints in the sample) were higher than the average or mean, reflecting the influence that the somewhat elevated “maximum” expenditures played in raising the average. Similarly, the maximum expenditures are an indication of the largest amount of expenditure in any category. For example the average expenditure for restaurant and grocery is \$39, whereas the maximum or largest single expenditure for the category is \$180, four times the average. Not all visitors spend money in the community and not all visitors spend money in all the expenditure categories listed. The last column in Table 20., percent with expenditures, indicates the magnitude or the percent of the visitor population that have expenditure in any given category. For example 53 percent of all visitors had restaurant or grocery expenditures in the community, whereas only 23 percent of all visitors had shopping related expenditures.

Table 20. Spending per day in Ajo

Spending per day	Mean (average)	Median (midpoint)	Maximum expenditures	Percent with expenditures
Number of people these expenses cover?	2.1	2	4	
Lodging/Camping	\$62	\$70	\$100	51%
Restaurant & Grocery	\$39	\$70	\$180	53%
Transportation (including gas)	\$36	\$40	\$100	39%
Shopping/Jewelry/Antiques	\$20	\$20	\$50	23%
Recreation/Tour/Entrance/Permit Fees	\$15	\$10	\$50	25%
Other expenditures	\$33	\$0	\$180	7%

A number of visitors also listed “other” expenditures. No explanations were supplied as to the nature of the expenses incurred.

The next question asked visitors to indicate their level of interest in participating in a number of activities in the Ajo area on their trip. Their interest was measured on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all interested” and 5 is “extremely interested.” These results are shown in Table 21. Almost half (47%) of activities earned ratings past the mid-point (3.0), the three activities that were ranked most highly were Visiting Museums (4.2 mean), Tribal Arts and Culture (4.1 mean) and Visiting National and State Parks (4.0 mean). Next in importance were Wildlife Viewing/Birding (3.9) and Geocaching (3.8%). Rounding out the top eight activities was Scenic Drives, Visiting Cultural and Historic sites (3.6 mean) and Touring by Motorcycle (3.0). At the other extreme, Mountain Biking and Attending Special Events were the least popular activities. See the full results in Table 21.

Table 21. Tell us how interested you are in participating in the following activities in the Ajo area

	Not at All Interested	A Little Interested	Somewhat Interested	Very Interested	Extremely Interested	Mean
Visiting Museums	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%	39.5%	50.0%	4.2
Tribal Arts and Culture	5.1%	7.7%	2.6%	46.2%	38.5%	4.1
Visiting National and State Parks	2.6%	7.7%	12.8%	43.6%	33.3%	4.0
Wildlife viewing/Birding	5.7%	2.9%	25.7%	28.6%	37.1%	3.9
Geocaching	7.9%	0.0%	23.7%	36.8%	31.6%	3.8
Scenic Drives	7.9%	5.3%	7.9%	52.6%	26.3%	3.8
Visiting Cultural and Historic Sites	10.8%	5.4%	21.6%	37.8%	24.3%	3.6
Touring by Motorcycle	14.7%	14.7%	38.2%	17.6%	14.7%	3.0
Hunting	40.5%	8.1%	5.4%	21.6%	24.3%	2.8
Visiting National Wildlife Refuge	31.0%	10.3%	24.1%	20.7%	13.8%	2.8
Arts and Crafts	31.4%	14.3%	40.0%	8.6%	5.7%	2.4
ATV/4-wheeling	53.1%	9.4%	15.6%	9.4%	12.5%	2.2
Antique/Jewelry Shopping	43.2%	16.2%	32.4%	5.4%	2.7%	2.1
Camping/RV Stay	54.5%	12.1%	18.2%	9.1%	6.1%	2.0
Hiking/Walking Trails	68.6%	8.6%	8.6%	5.7%	8.6%	1.8
Mountain Biking	77.1%	0.0%	5.7%	11.4%	5.7%	1.7
Attending a Special Event	84.4%	3.1%	6.3%	3.1%	3.1%	1.4
Other Activity	75.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	2.0

After rating their interest in this set of activities, visitors were asked whether they planned to participate in those same activities while in Ajo. Among top activities visitors planned to participate in were Hiking-Walking Trails (85.0%); even though this activity rated low on the list of “interests,” it was at the top of actual participation along with Visiting National and State Parks (85.0%). Also popular were Scenic Drives (70.0%); Wildlife-Viewing or Birding (60.0%); and Visiting Cultural/Historic sites and Museums (40% each). Clearly, one of the primary attractions of Ajo is its location close to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, which brings a lot of visitors to the community. See Table 22.

Table 22. Did you-Will you participate in the following activities in Ajo?

Did or Will you participate in these activities?	Count	Percent
Hiking-Walking Trails	28	85.0%
Visiting National and State Parks	28	85.0%
Scenic Drives	23	70.0%
Wildlife-Viewing Birding	19	60.0%
Visiting cultural and historic sites	13	40.0%
Visiting museums	13	40.0%
Visiting National Wildlife Refuge	11	35.0%
Antique/Jewelry Shopping	10	30.0%
Camping-RV Stay	8	25.0%
ATV/4-Wheeling Tours	6	20.0%
Attending a special event	6	20.0%
Tribal Arts and Culture	5	15.0%
Arts and Crafts	3	10.0%
Mountain Biking	2	5.0%
Hunting	0	0.0%
Geocaching	0	0.0%
Touring by Motorcycle	0	0.0%
Other activity	0	0.0%

A set of specific visitor attractions were provided in the next question and visitors were asked to specify those they planned to visit. The top-rank was earned by Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument with a majority (90%) of respondents who answered this question indicating they planned to visit this national monument. This was followed by the Open Pit Mine Overlook (52.5%); The Plaza/Train Depot (47.5%); Cabeza Prieta Wildlife Refuge (42.5%); and Ajo Historical Society Museum (40.0%). See the full list in Table 23.

Table 23. Plan to visit or visited these attractions in the Ajo area?

	Count	Percent
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	58	90.0%
Open Pit Mine Lookout	34	52.5%
The Plaza/Train Depot	31	47.5%
Cabeza Prieta Wildlife Refuge	28	42.5%
Ajo Historical Society Museum	26	40.0%
Kitt Peak Observatory	19	30.0%
Curley School	15	22.5%
Crater Range	8	12.5%
El Camino del Diablo Back County Byway	8	12.5%
Dispersed camping on BLM lands	8	12.5%
Tohono O'odham Cultural Center and Museum	5	7.5%
Golden Hassan Casino - Why	5	7.5%
Other attraction	2	2.5%

The next question asked visitors to rate their tourism experience in Ajo according to a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is “Extremely low satisfaction” and 10 is “Extremely high satisfaction.” Overall, visitors to Ajo rated their experiences at a very high mean of 8.2 – particularly impressive since we know that Ajo is a somewhat isolated community, with relatively few tourism resources. Nevertheless, visitors were very satisfied with their overall experiences in the community. See Table 24.

Table 24. What is your overall level of satisfaction with your experience in the Ajo area?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean
Overall satisfaction	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.1%	5.1%	12.8%	30.8%	20.5%	23.1%	8.2

1 = Extremely Low Level of Satisfaction 10 = Extremely High Level of Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to describe their experience of the Ajo area in a few words. Generally, comments were very positive noting the architecture and cleanliness of the community, the nascent artists' colony, and the splendor of Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. Other respondents noted the friendly and accommodating atmosphere of the town. A complete list of responses follows:

ACCOMMODATION AND RESTAURANT FACILITIES ARE POOR
 AJO IS CLEAN, NICE, SURPRISING
 BEAUTIFUL
 BEAUTIFUL OHV RIDES, HOWEVER AVAILABLE BLM MAPS WOULD BE NICE
 BEAUTIFUL SCENERY & PEOPLE
 COMMUNITY CENTER-MARY ESTES TALK ON 612 SQUADRON BASE AT ATO 2/28/12
 COOL TOWN-I'LL RETURN SOMEDAY
 EVERY MINUTE A PLEASURE TO BE HERE
 FRIENDLY AND ACCOMMODATING
 GOOD LIKE THE SQUARE
 GREAT-FRIENDLY TOWN

HAVE RECIEVED POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FROM AJO FRIENDS THIS TRIP IS TOO LIMITED
 INTERESTING AREA, FRIENDLY PEOPLE
 JUST ARRIVED. PLAN TO VISIT OLD TOWN
 JUST GOT HERE
 LOOKS LIKE A NICE TOWN
 LOVE THE AREA AND GREAT TOWN-PLENTY TO DO
 NICE TOWN-DISAPPOINTED WITH RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO HISTORICAL HIKING DUE TO BORDER
 PATROL
 NOT THERE YET
 ORGAN PIPE CACTUS NM-AMAZING!
 PASSED THROUGH A YEAR AGO & STOPPED TO EAT AT BOUSE
 THE ORGAN PIPE CACTUS NM WAS EXTRAORDINARY INTERESTING
 THIS IS A VERY UNIQUE SPECIAL PLACE
 TRUE LAND, NATURE, CLIMATE, FRIENDLY
 VERY FRIENDLY PEOPLE. LOTS OF HISTORY AND POTENTIAL BUT AJO SEEMED A LITTLE TIRED. EVENTUALLY
 THE ARTIST COMMUNITY WILL HELP REVITALIZE
 VERY UNIQUE TOWN/A LITTLE TO REMOTE FOR ME
 WOULD BE HELPFUL IF MORE INFO WAS AVAILABLE FOR ABOVE THINGS AND A BETTER FEEL FOR HOW SAFE
 IT IS TO GO INTO OFF HIGHWAY

The final questions on the Ajo visitor survey were concerned with the demographics of those who visit Ajo. The first question concerned the gender of visitors. As shown in Table 25 below, slightly more women (52.2%) than men (47.8%) visited Ajo.

Table 25. Gender of visitors

	Count	Percent
Female	39	52.2%
Male	36	47.8%

Visitor age was the next question. The average age of visitors was 48.5 or 49 years – slightly higher than the average age of 2011 Arizona visitors statewide of 47.2 years. When comparing visitor age by gender, a difference appeared – average age of women was 46 and the average of men was 53. See Table 26.

Table 26. Age by gender

	Female	Male
	Mean	Mean
Visitor age in years	45.7	52.5

The largest cohort of visitors was in the 46 to 50 year age group (22.0%), then the 41 to 45 year age group (19.5%), followed by the 36 to 40 year age group (17.1%), and 31 to 35 year age group (7.3%). Thus, almost two-thirds of visitors (65.9%) are under age 50, with one-third (34.1%) over age 50. Clearly, the younger middle aged market is the primary visitor demographic in Ajo. See Table 27.

Table 27. Age ranges of visitors

	Count	Percent
20 and under	0	0%
21 - 25 years	0	0%
26 - 30 years	0	0%
31 - 35 years	5	7.3%
36 - 40 years	11	17.1%
41 - 45 years	13	19.5%
46 - 50 years	15	22.0%
51 - 55 years	6	9.8%
56 - 60 years	8	12.2%
61 - 65 years	5	7.3%
66 - 70 years	2	2.4%
71 - 75 years	2	2.4%
76 years and older	0	0%

The average size of the visitor parties who travel to Ajo is 2.1 persons (slightly lower than the 2011 statewide average for all Arizona visitors of 2.7). Thus, most parties consist of one man, one woman and no children, although larger parties will tend to consist of greater numbers of women. Despite the average of 1.3 children per-party, only 5.3 percent of all respondents or 5 parties contained children. See Table 28.

Table 28. Travel Party Size

	Mean	Median	Maximum
Total number of people in your party?	2.1	2.0	4.0
Number of women	1.3	1.0	4.0
Number of men	1.2	1.0	3.0
Number of children under 18 years of age	1.3	1.0	2.0

What is the nature or constitution of the travel parties who visit Ajo? The majority of all parties consist of Family members only (70.5%). The remaining parties consist of those travelling alone (15.9%), followed by mixed groups of Family and friends (13.6%). See Table 29.

Table 29. Who is traveling with you on this trip?

	Count	Percent
Family Only	50	70.5%
Nobody, traveling alone	11	15.9%
Family and Friends	10	13.6%
Business Associates	0	0.0%
Organized Tour Group	0	0.0%
Friends only	0	0.0%

The average annual income of those who visit Ajo is \$62,799 – somewhat lower than the average for 2011 visitors statewide of \$74,660. The largest cohort of visitors was in the \$40,000 to \$59,999 category (32.3%), followed by the \$60,000 to \$79,999 category (16.1%), then the \$20,000 to \$39,999 category (19.4%). See all data in Table 30.

Table 30. Which of the following categories best describes your annual household income?

	Count	Percent
Less than \$19,999	2	3.2%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	10	19.4%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	16	32.3%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	8	16.1%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	6	12.9%
\$100,000 to \$119,999	6	12.9%
\$120,000 and above	2	3.2%

Weighted average annual income \$62,799

Appendix A
Survey Instrument

AJO AREA VISITOR STUDY

Hello! Welcome to the Ajo area. We appreciate your time in contributing to our visitor survey. Please complete and return it to the surveyor. Your responses will be anonymous, reported only in aggregate, and not identified with any individual. Thank you!

Please indicate the current month: January March May July September November
 February April June August October December

1. How did you hear about the Ajo area? Mark all that apply.

- Newspaper Radio Online/Website Word-of-mouth
 Magazine TV Social Networking Sites Been here before Other, list:

2. Is the Ajo area the primary destination of your trip?

- Yes No If not, what location is the primary destination of your trip?

3. Please mark all of the following communities you plan to visit on this trip.

- Phoenix Area Tohono O'odham Nation Nogales
 Yuma Area Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument
 Tucson Area Puerto Penasco (Rocky Point), Mexico Other:

4. Indicate the primary purpose(s) of your current visit to the area. Mark all that apply.

- Just Passing Through Weekend Visit Visiting Friends and/or Relatives
 To go to Mexico Vacation/Leisure Climate
 Day Trip Business Travel Relocation Other, define:

5. Indicate your primary mode of transportation.

- Private auto RV/Camper Tour bus
 Rental car Motorcycle Other, define:

6. How much time, in total, will you spend in the Ajo area (includes Why, Organ Pipe Cactus NM, Cabeza Prieta and the Tohono O'odham Nation) on this trip?

Choose either day trip or overnight trip and fill in the length of time in whole numbers with NO decimal places. (Example: 1 not 1.0) 1
 If a day trip only, how many hours:
 If staying overnight, how many nights:

7. If staying overnight in the Ajo area, what type of lodging are you using?

Mark all that apply. (Leave blank if staying elsewhere)

- Hotel/Motel RV Park Bed & Breakfast
 Home of Friends/Family Camping Other, define:

If you are staying overnight away from home on this trip, please provide the locations below:

In what City did you spend last night?

In what City will you stay tonight?

8. If your permanent residence is in the U.S. please write in your 5-digit ZIP-CODE

If you are not from the U.S. please list your Country of Origin:

9. Please estimate as closely as possible the amount of money that your travel party is spending per DAY in the Ajo area for the following categories in U.S. dollars with NO decimal places.

(Example 92 not 92.00) 92 Do NOT include expenditures for Mexico etc.

First, please tell us the number of people these expenses cover.
 Lodging/Camping \$
 Restaurant & Grocery \$
 Transportation (incl gas) \$

Shopping/Jewelry/Antiques \$
 Recreation/Tour / Entrance /Permit fees \$
 Other \$

Define Other:

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10. First tell us how interested you are in participating in the following activities, then indicate those activities you have or will participate in. Do not include events/activities in Mexico.

	Interest Level:					Did/Will you participate?
	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Very	Extremely	
Antique/Jewelry Shopping	<input type="radio"/>					
Arts & Crafts	<input type="radio"/>					
ATV/4-Wheeling	<input type="radio"/>					
Wildlife viewing/Birding.....	<input type="radio"/>					
Hunting..	<input type="radio"/>					
Camping/RV Stay.....	<input type="radio"/>					
Geocaching	<input type="radio"/>					
Hiking/Walking Trails.....	<input type="radio"/>					
Mountain Biking	<input type="radio"/>					
Touring by Motorcycle.....	<input type="radio"/>					
Tribal Arts & Culture	<input type="radio"/>					
Scenic Drives.....	<input type="radio"/>					
Visiting Cultural & Historic Sites	<input type="radio"/>					
Visiting Museums.....	<input type="radio"/>					
Visiting National/State Parks/Monuments	<input type="radio"/>					
Visiting National Wildlife Refuge	<input type="radio"/>					
Attending a special event (concert, festival etc.): Define here	<input type="text"/>					<input type="radio"/>
Other activity: Define here	<input type="text"/>					<input type="radio"/>

11. Please mark those attractions you have visited or plan to visit in the area.

- The Plaza/Train Depot
- Curley School
- Ajo Historical Society Museum
- Open Pit Mine Lookout
- Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument
- Cabeza Prieta Wildlife Refuge
- Crater Range
- El Camino del Diablo Back Country Byway
- Dispersed camping on BLM lands
- Kitt Peak Telescope
- Tohono O'odham Cultural Center & Museum
- Golden Hassan Casino - Why
- Other list:

12. On a scale of 1 to 10 where one is Low and ten is High, please indicate your overall satisfaction with your experience in the Ajo area.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please describe your experience in a few words.

Finally, we have some questions about your travel party that will help us understand more about you.

13. What is your gender? Female Male In what year were you born? 19

14. How many people including yourself are in your travel party?

Total number of people: Number of: Women Men Children under 18

15. Who is traveling with you on this trip? Family and Friends Friends Only Organized Tour Group
 Family Only Nobody, traveling alone Business Associates

16. Which of the following categories best describes your annual household income?

- Less than \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$79,999
- \$80,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$119,999
- \$120,000 and above

Thank You For Taking The Time To Complete The Survey.

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